

Less bristle for a buck from high-tech press

By Roger Boye

George Washington has lost a bit of his 5 o'clock shadow on millions of freshly printed \$1 bills entering circulation.

That's because Uncle Sam is using a high-tech web press to produce some (but not all) of the series 1988A \$1 Federal Reserve notes.

Among other things, the new greenbacks have lighter shading on the front side, especially within George's portrait and the word

"ONE" to the right of the portrait. Also, each bill is missing the plate location number in the upper left corner and the plate location letter in the lower right corner of the front side.

Those changes occurred with the debut of a web press that uses a continuous roll of paper and prints the back side of a \$1 bill and most of the front side in a single pass through the press. The government's older machines—which will remain in operation—are sheet fed, and print the back and front sides in separate opera-

tions, 32 notes per sheet.

"Once we're out of the testing phase, the web press will do the work of four sheet-fed presses," said Ira M. Polikoff, a spokesman for the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Eventually, the press should produce at least 1.5 billion Federal Reserve notes a year.

Bills made on the web have lighter front-side shading because the press employs a chrome-plated printing cylinder of 96 bills, as well as a different ink, Polikoff said..